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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
FOR A FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE
CHANGE
Seventh session
New York, 15-20 March 1993

REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR A FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE WORK OF ITS SEVENTH SESSION HELD AT NEW YORK FROM 15 TO 20 MARCH 1993

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I. OPENING OF THE SESSION AND GENERAL STATEMENTS

1. The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change was held at New York from 15 to 20 March 1993. The meeting was convened in accordance with paragraphs 6 and 7 of General Assembly resolution 47/195 of 22 December 1992 entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

2. The session of the Committee was opened by the Chairman, Mr. Jean Ripert (France). In welcoming the participants, the Chairman recalled that the main purpose of the session was to discuss arrangements for the financial mechanism of the Convention in accordance with the decision contained in paragraph 53 of the report of the Committee on its sixth session (A/AC.237/24). He drew attention to the need to elect a new Chairman and to replace several officers of the Committee, who, for a variety of reasons, had relinquished their posts.

3. The Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, Mr. Nitin Desai, addressed the session at its 1st plenary meeting, on 15 March. He paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman for his leadership in the negotiations, which had resulted in the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Convention addressed a global environmental problem, but the responses to the problem cut across many aspects of development and economic activity. It was therefore the first ever convention on sustainable development. He assured the Committee of his full support and the support of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. The interim secretariat for the Convention would preserve its identity within the supportive environment of the Department and every effort would be made to ensure that it would be appropriately strengthened to carry out its functions, as called for in General Assembly resolution 47/195. He wished the Committee every success in its work.

4. At the 2nd meeting, on 15 March, the representatives of Colombia (on behalf of the Group of 77) and the United States of America made general statements.

5. Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, newly appointed Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), addressed the Committee at its 4th meeting, on 16 March. She congratulated the new Chairman and other members of the Bureau on their election and made special mention of the unique role played by the outgoing Chairman throughout the negotiations. The main purpose of her statement was to reiterate and reinforce the commitment she had made at the sixth session of the Committee that UNEP would be fully supportive of the needs of the Convention. UNEP, and indeed also the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), had received mandates from the General Assembly, their own governing bodies and the Convention itself, and both were uniquely equipped to pursue those mandates. UNEP was already involved in joint activities with other organizations, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in developing methodologies for inventories of greenhouse gas emissions and sinks, as well as for impact assessments, and was conducting country studies in several countries. Those activities would be pursued vigorously. Specific projects which could be developed jointly with the interim secretariat included information systems. She noted that those matters would be discussed under the Committee's agenda, and again pledged the full cooperation of UNEP. UNEP also planned to resume secondment of staff to support the secretariat in its work. She wished the Committee every success in its deliberations.

6. At the 6th meeting, on 18 March, the representative of the Global Climate Coalition made a statement on behalf of business non-governmental organizations.

7. At the 7th meeting, on 19 March, the representative of Greenpeace International made a statement behalf of environmental non-governmental organizations.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Election of officers

8. Following extensive informal consultations, the Committee, at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 16 March, elected officers of the Committee and of its two Working Groups to fill vacancies that had arisen. This resulted in the following list of officers:

Chairman:	Mr. Raúl Estrada-Oyuela (Argentina)
Vice-Chairmen:	Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaf (Algeria) Mr. Maciej Sadowski (Poland) Mr. T. P. Sreenivasan (India) Ms. Penelope Wensley (Australia)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Maciej Sadowski (Poland)

Working Group I

Co-Chairmen:	Mr. Mahmoud Ould El Ghaouth (Mauritania) Ms. Cornelia Quennet (Germany)
Vice-Chairman: (in charge of consultations)	Mr. Edmundo de Alba Alcaraz (Mexico)

Working Group II

Co-Chairmen:	Mr. Nobutoshi Akao (Japan) Mr. Robert F. Van Lierop (Vanuatu)
Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Tibor Faragó (Hungary)

9. The newly elected Chairman, Mr. Raúl Estrada-Oyuela (Argentina), paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman. Mr. Ripert had worked tirelessly to achieve success in the negotiations for the Convention. He had more than fulfilled his responsibilities to the international community and was a credit to his country, France, which had shown its appreciation in elevating him to the rank of Commander of the Legion of Honour. Mr. Estrada thanked the other outgoing members of the Bureau for their contribution to the work of the Committee. He also thanked Messrs. Nobutoshi Akao (Japan), Edmundo de Alba Alcaraz (Mexico) and Winfried Lang (Austria) for their outstanding cooperation in facilitating the election of officers. He thanked the Committee for electing him to this highly responsible position and pledged his best efforts to conduct the work of the Committee effectively and efficiently.

10. Statements were made by the representatives of Bangladesh, Barbados, the Czech Republic, Ireland and Nigeria, on behalf of their respective regional groups. The representative of Vanuatu made a statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States. Statements were also made by the representatives of Latvia and the Russian Federation.

11. The Executive Secretary expressed special thanks to the outgoing Chairman. It had been a rare privilege to work with Mr. Ripert, who had provided the secretariat with valuable guidance, help and support. The secretariat would continue to make every effort to further the work of the Committee and its Bureau.

B. Adoption of the agenda

12. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 15 March 1993, the Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Organizational matters:

   (a) Election of officers;

   (b) Adoption of the agenda;

   (c) Organization of work.

2. Matters relating to arrangements for the financial mechanism and for technical and financial support to developing country Parties:

   (a) Implementation of Article 11 (Financial mechanism), paras. 1-4;

   (b) Provision to developing country Parties of technical and financial support.

3. Procedural, institutional and legal matters: rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties.

4. Status of signature and ratification of the Convention.

5. Future sessions of the Committee: calendar and priorities.

6. Review of the activities of the interim secretariat, including review of extrabudgetary funds.

7. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its seventh session.

13. The Committee decided to consider under agenda item 5 the letter dated 1 March 1993 from the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to the Chairman of the Committee (A/AC.237/29, annex).

C. Organization of work

14. At its 1st meeting, on 15 March, the Committee approved the organization of its work as contained in document A/AC.237/25.

D. Attendance

15. The seventh session was attended by representatives of the following 147 States:

Albania
Algeria
Angola
Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Benin
Bolivia
Botswana
Brazil
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Cape Verde
Central African Rep.
Chad
Chile
China
Colombia
Comoros
Congo
Costa Rica
Côte d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Democratic People's Rep. of Korea
Denmark
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Rep.
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Fiji
Finland
France
Gabon
Gambia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Guyana
Haiti
Holy See
Honduras
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)
Iraq
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Kiribati
Lao People's Democratic Rep.
Latvia
Lebanon
Lesotho
Liberia
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Lithuania
Madagascar
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Malta
Marshall Islands
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Micronesia (Fed. States of)
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar
Namibia
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Panama
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Rep. of Korea
Rep. of Moldova
Romania
Russian Fed.
Saint Lucia
Samoa
Sao Tomé and Principe
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovak Republic
Solomon Islands
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Sweden
Switzerland
Thailand
Togo
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Tuvalu
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay
Vanuatu
Venezuela
Zaire
Zambia
Zimbabwe

16. The following United Nations offices and programmes were represented: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

17. The following specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/UNESCO; World Bank; World Meteorological Organization; WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

18. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation; Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee; Caribbean Meteorological Organization; Commission of the European Communities; International Energy Agency/OECD; Organization of African Unity; Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment.

19. The following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were represented:

Category I: International Chamber of Commerce.

Category II: Federation of National Representatives of the Experiment in International Living; Greenpeace International; International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association; World Coal Institute; World Council of Churches.

Roster: International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers; Natural Resources Defense Council.

20. The following other non-governmental organizations were also represented: Alliance for Responsible CFC Policy; American Gas Association; Center for Global Change; Climate Action Network; Climate Council; Climate Institute; Edison Electric Institute; Environmental Defense Fund; Environmental and Energy Study Institute; Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development; Global Climate Coalition; Global Commons Institute; Institute for Resource and Security Studies; International Academy of the Environment; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; National Coal Association; National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; Stockholm Environment Institute; Tata Energy Research Institute; Union of Concerned Scientists; United States Council for International Business; University of Washington; Uranium Institute; Woods Hole Research Center; World Wide Fund for Nature.

21. The following organization was represented by an observer: Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania.

E. Documentation

22. The documents before the Committee at its seventh session are listed in the annex to the present report.

III. MATTERS RELATING TO ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY PARTIES

23. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 15 March 1993, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, in accordance with its decision 1/1 (A/AC.237/6, annex/II), allocated agenda item 2 (Matters relating to arrangements for the financial mechanism and for technical and financial support to developing country Parties) to Working Group II.

24. At its 1st meeting, on 16 March, Working Group II, bearing in mind rule 46 of the rules of procedure of the Committee, maintained the decision taken at its second session (A/AC.237/9, para. 36) that its meetings would be open unless it decided otherwise. Subsequently, Working Group II held 8 open meetings from 15 to 19 March 1993.

A. Implementation of article 11 (Financial mechanism), paragraphs 1-4

25. Working Group II considered sub-item 2 (a) (Implementation of article 11 (Financial mechanism), paras. 1-4) at its 1st to 8th meetings, on 15 to 19 March. It had before it the following documentation:

(a) Note by the secretariat on the implementation of article 11 (Financial mechanism) (A/AC.237/26);

(b) Note by the secretariat on selected background documentation relating to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (A/AC.237/26/Add.1);

(c) Note by the secretariat on further information on the work of the GEF (A/AC.237/26/Add.2).

26. At the 1st meeting, on 16 March, the Executive Secretary made an introductory statement.

27. At the 2nd meeting, on 16 March, a statement was made by the Administrator of the Global Environment Facility.

28. Statements were made by 43 delegations, including one speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and one speaking on behalf of the European Economic Community and its member States.

B. Provision to developing country Parties of technical and financial support

29. Working Group II considered sub-item 2 (b) (Provision to developing country Parties of technical and financial support) at its 4th meeting, on 17 March.

30. For its consideration of the sub-item, the Working Group had before it a note by the Executive Secretary on the review of the activities of the interim secretariat, including the review of extrabudgetary funds (A/AC.237/28, sect. I.A).

31. Statements were made by the representatives of 12 States, including one speaking on behalf of the European Economic Community and its member States.

C. Conclusions

32. On the recommendation of Working Group II, the Committee, at its 8th meeting, on 20 March, agreed upon the following conclusions: 1/

(i) Financial mechanism

(a) In the framework of the preparation of the first session of the Conference of the Parties, where the issue of the financial mechanism will be decided, in accordance with article 11, paragraph 4, of the Convention, and in the perspective of the forthcoming meetings of the Participants of the GEF, the Committee, in accordance with its decision taken during its sixth session, undertook a first discussion on matters relating to the implementation of article 11 as well as to the interim arrangements provided under article 21, paragraph 3. The discussion took place in the light of the information and analysis provided by the interim secretariat (A/AC.237/26 and Add.1-2). In this context the Administrator of the GEF made a presentation to the Committee;

(b) The Committee decided to focus its work on this item on matters related to the functional linkages between the Conference of the Parties and the operating entity or entities of the financial mechanism, under the terms of article 11 of the Convention;

(c) In deciding on this priority, the Committee took note of the timetable of activities aimed at the restructuring and the replenishment of the GEF by the end of 1993. It resolved to contribute to both these processes in a constructive and timely manner, in accordance with its mandate and with the aim that the GEF satisfy the requirements of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;

Policies, programme priorities and eligibility criteria

(d) The Committee considered the provision of guidance to the financial mechanism on policies, programme priorities and eligibility criteria, in accordance with article 11, paragraph 1, of the Convention;

(e) It recalled that the financial mechanism shall function under the guidance of and be accountable to the Conference of the Parties, which shall decide on its policies, programme priorities and eligibility criteria related to the Convention. It further concluded that articles 4, 5 and 6 of the Convention would be a basis from which priorities would be drawn;

(f) It requested the officers of Working Group II to submit proposals on these subjects to it at its eighth session, taking account of views expressed at its current session and others that might be submitted to the secretariat;

(g) In this connection, the Committee underlined the importance of agreement on approaches to the determination of "agreed full incremental costs" as specified in article 4, paragraph 3, of the Convention. The Committee requested the Executive Secretary to work on these approaches and to inform it at its eighth session of the progress achieved in this regard;

1/ In the discussions leading to the adoption of paragraph 10(m) below, several delegations referred to other funding needs for developing and other countries arising under various paragraphs of article 4 of the Convention.

Governance and accountability

(h) The Committee further considered matters relating to the governance of the financial mechanism and to its accountability to the Conference of the Parties in accordance with article 11, paragraphs 1 to 3, and article 21, paragraph 3, of the Convention;

(i) The Committee recalled that in accordance with article 11, paragraph 2, the Convention requires that the financial mechanism shall be equitable and balanced in its representation of all parties within a transparent system of governance;

(j) Reports from an operating entity to the Conference of the Parties should include specific information on how it has applied the guidance and decisions of the Conference of the Parties in its work related to the Convention;

(k) The Chairman of the Committee, and subsequently the Chairman of the Conference of the Parties, should be represented at meetings of the GEF Participants. It was also felt that the Chairman of the GEF Participants' meetings should establish a regular and more formal representation at the Committee's sessions.

Linkages between the Conference of the Parties and the operating entity or entities of the financial mechanism

(l) Having reviewed the need for arrangements under article 11, paragraph 3, to be agreed between the Conference of the Parties and the operating entity or entities of the financial mechanism, the Committee requested the Bureau with the assistance of the Executive Secretary, to prepare a report for consideration at its eighth session on modalities for the functioning of operational linkages between the Conference of the Parties and the operating entity or entities of the financial mechanism, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, taking into account the views expressed by delegations and others;

Amount of funding

(m) With respect to the determination of the amount of funding necessary and available for the implementation of the Convention, the Committee considered that it would be important, as a first step, for the ongoing replenishment of the GEF for the period 1994-1996 to take full account of funding needs related to the Convention. These needs arise in connection with the obligations of developing country Parties to communicate information under article 12, paragraphs 1 and 5, of the Convention, from the need of developing countries for support in their preparations for the implementation of commitments under the Convention and from the wide range of opportunities for developing countries to undertake projects in the 1994-1996 period that are consistent with those commitments;

(n) In this context, the Committee requested the Executive Secretary, under the guidance of the Bureau, to prepare a preliminary list of elements relevant to the assessment of the needs for funding from the GEF for activities related to the Convention in the three years 1994-1996 for consideration at its next session;

Future work

(o) The Committee resolved to give priority at its eighth session to the consideration by Working Group II of the implementation of article 11 (Financial Mechanism) and to the adoption of such decisions as might be necessary, in the context of the mandate of the Conference of the Parties, on guidance to the operating entity or entities of the financial mechanism concerning its policies, programme priorities and eligibility criteria related to the Convention, including in the determination of "agreed full incremental costs";

(p) The Committee requested its Chairman to convey the above conclusions to the forthcoming meeting of the Participants in the GEF at Beijing, China (26-28 May 1993). After informal consultations on the draft decision submitted by the Group of 77 and China (A/AC.237/L.18, dated 19 March 1993), the Committee deferred to its eighth session further consideration of that document, which is listed in the annex to the present report;

(ii) Technical and financial cooperation: Information exchange system in support of article 12, paragraph 7, of the Convention

(q) The Committee considered the response of the Executive Secretary (document A/AC.237/28, sect. I.A) to its request on this subject at its sixth session (document A/AC.237/24, para. 51). It noted that the Executive Secretary proposed to explore the feasibility of a joint project with UNEP to establish and operate an information exchange system that would be a first step in support of article 12, paragraph 7, of the Convention. The main objective of this system would be to facilitate and coordinate external support, on request, for activities in developing and other countries related to the Convention. It welcomed the statement by the Executive Director of UNEP confirming its willingness to collaborate in such a joint project under the auspices of the interim secretariat;

(r) The Committee requested the Executive Secretary, in conjunction with UNEP, to proceed with the elaboration of the proposed joint project, taking account of the views expressed by delegations in the discussion of this item, and to seek extrabudgetary funding for the project, possibly through the GEF. It further requested the Executive Secretary to report on progress to the Committee at its eighth session.

IV. PROCEDURAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS

A. Rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties

33. At its 1st plenary meeting, on 15 March 1993, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee also allocated item 3 (Procedural, institutional and legal matters) to Working Group II.

34. Working Group II considered sub-item 3(a) (Rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties) at its 4th and 5th meetings, on 17 and 18 March.

35. For its consideration of the sub-item, the Working Group had before it a note by the secretariat on the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties (A/AC.237/27).

36. At the 4th meeting, on 17 March, the Executive Secretary made an introductory statement. At the same meeting, the Legal Adviser of the interim secretariat made a statement in explanation of document A/AC.237/27.

37. Statements were made by the representatives of 10 States.

38. At the 5th meeting, on 18 March, on the proposal of the Co-Chairman, speaking on behalf of the Bureau, Working Group II decided to defer further discussion of the sub-item until the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.

39. At the 6th and 7th meetings, on 18 and 19 March, the Working Group was informed by the Co-Chairman that statements had been made in plenary session on behalf of non-governmental organizations, with regard to, inter alia, the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties.

B. Conclusion

40. On the recommendation of Working Group II, the Committee, at its 8th meeting, on 20 March, agreed upon the following conclusion:

Having considered the draft rules of procedure for the Conference of the Parties submitted by the interim secretariat in document A/AC.237/27, the Committee requested the secretariat to submit to its eighth session a revision of these draft rules, taking account of comments and written submissions by delegations, as well as those that might be received from the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs.

41. The Chairman noted that the views which had been expressed on behalf of non-governmental organizations with respect to the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties would be borne in mind in the Committee's further consideration of this matter.

V. STATUS OF SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION

42. At its 8th plenary meeting, on 20 March, the Committee noted that there were currently 161 signatories to the Convention and that ratifications, acceptances, approvals or accessions had been deposited by 16 States.

43. The Committee took note of the information provided by the interim secretariat on the rectification of the texts of the Convention.

44. The Committee expressed its appreciation to those States that had ratified the Convention and urged other signatories to do the same as soon as possible so that the Convention might enter into force. It invited those signatories to inform the interim secretariat of the expected timing of their ratification, and requested the secretariat to submit that information to the Committee at its eighth session.

VI. FUTURE SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE: CALENDAR AND PRIORITIES

45. The Committee discussed matters relating to this item at the 5th to 7th plenary meetings, from 17 to 19 March 1993.

A. Calendar

46. The Committee recalled the scheduling of its eighth session, from 16 to 27 August 1993 at Geneva, and requested the secretariat to make proposals for two sessions of two weeks each in 1994 and one in 1995, taking into account the following possible dates and places:

7-18 February 1994, Geneva or 31 January-11 February 1994, New York
22-31 August 1994, Geneva
Two weeks in February 1995, New York or Nairobi

47. The Committee noted that its schedule for 1994 and 1995 would need to be approved by the General Assembly, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 and on the recommendation of the Committee on Conferences. It further noted that its schedule beyond 1993 would need to be reviewed in the light of progress made towards the entry into force of the Convention and the consequential scheduling of the first session of the Conference of the Parties.

48. The Committee noted with appreciation that the Government of Germany was making plans to act as host for the first session of the Conference of the Parties, tentatively scheduled to be held in early 1995.

B. Priorities

49. On the recommendation of the officers of Working Group I, the Committee decided that, at its eighth session, Working Group I should start consideration of matters relating to the following tasks defined at its sixth session (see A/AC.237/24 and Corr.1, paras. 43 to 46 and annex I).

Task A.1. Methodologies for calculations/inventories of emissions and removals of greenhouse gases

Review of information from IPCC on the progress of relevant work; consideration of issues to be addressed by the Committee and the Conference of the Parties.

Task A.2. Criteria for joint implementation

Review of available information and decisions on further work.

Task A.3. First review of the information communicated by each Party included in annex I of the Convention

Consideration of:

(a) Formats and contents of communications;

(b) Methodologies for evaluating the effectiveness of measures;

(c) Compilation and synthesis of information in communications for purposes of aggregation, assessment of overall effects and report on implementation.

50. In dealing with each of these matters, Working Group I would consider, as appropriate, the role of the subsidiary bodies established by the Convention.

51. Also during the eighth session, Working Group II should continue consideration of the items before it at the seventh session.

52. The Committee requested the Executive Secretary to draw up the provisional agenda for its eighth session, taking account of these conclusions, in consultation with the Chairman and the Bureau. It also requested the Executive Secretary to prepare adequate documentation for its work at the session.

C. Scientific and technical advice from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

53. The Committee had before it the letter from the Chairman of IPCC to the Chairman of the Committee (A/AC.237/29, annex) and the reply of the Chairman of the Committee to the Chairman of IPCC (A/AC.237/30, annex). Statements were made by two delegations.

54. The Committee took note of this exchange of letters, noting further that the matters raised therein could be considered by Working Group I during the eighth session.

VII. REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT, INCLUDING REVIEW OF EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS

55. At the 5th plenary meeting, on 17 March, the Executive Secretary introduced his note containing a review of the activities of the interim secretariat, including a review of extrabudgetary funds (A/AC.237/28).

A. Current activities of the interim secretariat

56. It was noted that the matter of clearing-house activities (A/AC.237/28, sect. I.A) would be taken up by Working Group II under agenda item 2 (b).

57. The Executive Secretary provided information to the Committee on the information and training programme being developed by the interim secretariat and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), in collaboration with the secretariats of the Global Environment Facility, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations Development Programme; on cooperation with the Information Unit on Climate Change of the United Nations Environment Programme; on the development of data-processing capacities for the interim secretariat; and on the secretariat's plans to convene a meeting of relevant entities of the United Nations system before the eighth session of the Committee.

(a) Information and training programme (A/AC.237/28, sect. I.B)

58. The Committee expressed appreciation to all partners involved with the interim secretariat in the elaboration, development and financing of the project for the pilot phase of the information and training programme. It looked forward to receiving information at its eighth session on the implementation of the project.

(b) Cooperation with the UNEP Information Unit on Climate Change (A/AC.237/28, sect. II.C)

59. The Committee welcomed the collaboration between the interim secretariat and the UNEP Information Unit on Climate Change in several areas, including the production of a climate change newsletter, the first issue of which was expected in the second quarter of 1993.

(c) Development of data-processing capacities (A/AC.237/28, sect. II.D)

60. The Committee expressed appreciation to the Government of Switzerland for its generous contribution to the development of data-processing capacities for the interim secretariat.

(d) Information on relevant activities of the United Nations system (A/AC.237/28, sect. II.E)

61. The Committee recalled that the interim secretariat would convene a meeting of entities of the United Nations system having activities related to the Convention and report to the Committee at its eighth session on activities relating to climate change in the United Nations system as a whole, and on the coordination of efforts in this field.

B. Administrative and budgetary matters

62. The Executive Secretary recalled that once the current Secretariat restructuring exercise had been approved by the General Assembly, the interim secretariat would become part of the Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. That would have positive benefits, as had been indicated in the statement made by the Under-Secretary-General responsible for that Department. Regarding the allocation of staff resources, he assumed that the present level of staffing would be maintained. He pointed out, however, that it was not yet clear whether and how the interim secretariat would be strengthened, as had been requested in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 47/195. He indicated that the new phase of work in the Committee would require new skills and make new demands.

63. Several representatives referred to the positive commitment to strengthening the interim secretariat made by the Under-Secretary-General in his statement to the Committee. They emphasized that the interim secretariat should have sufficient resources to carry out its functions up to the first session of the Conference of the Parties. It was agreed that delegations to the Committee would keep their respective delegations to other concerned bodies of the United Nations informed of the need to strengthen the interim secretariat.

64. The Committee noted with appreciation the positive statement delivered by the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development at the 1st meeting, on 15 March, and his assurances with regard to the future of the interim secretariat and its resources.

65. The Committee welcomed the offer of staff support from the Executive Director of UNEP in her statement before the Committee at its 4th meeting, on 16 March.

66. The Committee noted that its work at the present session had been supported by substantive documentation prepared by its secretariat. It would expect similar support on all aspects of its work at future sessions. It further noted that the scope of its evolving work programme in preparation for the first session of the Conference of the Parties (see A/AC.237/24, sect. V) would call for new types of expertise within the secretariat.

67. Consequently, the Committee emphasized that the interim secretariat should be strengthened, in accordance with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 47/195, so that the secretariat would be able to carry out additional responsibilities in support of the Committee's work in the following areas:

(a) Communication and review of information under the Convention;

(b) Implementation of article 11 and article 21, paragraph 3, of the Convention, related to the financial mechanism;

(c) Promotion of capacity-building in accordance with the Convention and General Assembly resolution 47/195.

68. The Committee invited the Executive Secretary to draw to the attention of the Secretary-General the need to identify and obtain additional staff resources for work in those areas in the period up to and including the first session of the Conference of the Parties.

C. Review of extrabudgetary funds

69. The Executive Secretary said that 114 developing countries were eligible for funding from the special voluntary fund for financing participation in the Committee's sessions. Of those countries, 85 had taken advantage of this support for their participation in the seventh session. Additional finance had enabled 11 countries with economies in transition to receive support for their participation. The commitments from the special voluntary fund would amount to an estimated US$ 3 million up to and including the seventh session; these commitments were covered by monies currently paid or pledged to the fund. He informed the Committee that the projected need for additional funding to cover participation in the eighth session was US$ 600,000. He expressed the hope that this funding would be forthcoming.

70. With regard to the trust fund for the negotiating process, that was used to defray secretariat expenses, the Executive Secretary indicated that US$ 1 million had been received through that fund. He noted the state of various staff support arrangements. He expressed thanks to contributors for their support.

71. The Committee expressed appreciation to those countries that had provided contributions to the special voluntary fund for the participation of developing countries in the sessions of the Committee and to the trust fund for the negotiating process, as well as to those countries and organizations that provide support for staff positions in the interim secretariat. It expressed the hope that sufficient contributions would be forthcoming for the special voluntary fund to maintain full and effective participation at the eighth session of the Committee and beyond.

D. Concluding remarks

72. The Chairman stated that it was his understanding that the Committee encouraged the Executive Secretary to continue to collaborate with all relevant organizations and entities, within the framework of the mandate and the conclusions of the Committee.

73. The Executive Secretary noted that the secretariat had been entrusted with substantial preparatory work for the eighth session of the Committee. He expressed appreciation for the confidence thus placed in the secretariat and assured the Committee that the secretariat would do its best to provide supportive documentation for its work. He observed that staff resources continued to be a constraint. He noted with satisfaction the encouragement to continue to build open and collaborative relationships with other secretariats.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS SEVENTH SESSION

74. At its 8th plenary meeting, on 20 March, the Committee considered and adopted the draft report on its seventh session (A/AC.237/L.17 and its addenda). It requested the Rapporteur to complete the report with the assistance of the secretariat, under the guidance of the Chairman, taking into account the discussions of the Committee.

Annex

List of documents before the Committee at its seventh session

A/AC.237/18 (Part II) and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
A/AC.237/24 (and Corr.1 in English only)	Report of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of its sixth session, held at Geneva from 7 to 10 December 1992
A/AC.237/25	Provisional agenda and annotations, including suggestions for the organization of work
A/AC.237/26 (and Add.1 in English only and Add.2)	Implementation of Article 11 (Financial Mechanism): Note by the secretariat
A/AC.237/27	Rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties: Note by the Executive Secretary
A/AC.237/28	Review of the activities of the interim secretariat, including review of extrabudgetary funds: Note by the Executive Secretary
A/AC.237/29	Letter from the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to the Chairman of the Committee
A/AC.237/30	Letter from the Chairman of the Committee to the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
A/AC.237/INF.10	Dates of signature and ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
A/AC.237/INF.12	Communications received in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/195, paragraph 4: Note by the secretariat
A/AC.237/L.17 and Add.1-3	Draft report of the Committee on its seventh session
A/AC/237/L.18	Group of 77 and China: draft decision. Recommendations of the Committee to the Global Environment Facility
A/AC.237/Misc.25	Provisional list of participants

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